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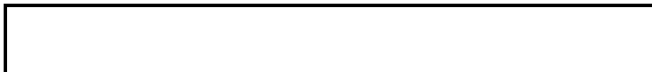
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CAMBODIA: The decision by student leaders to end large-scale antigovernment demonstrations should help ease political tensions in Phnom Penh.

The students probably felt that their week-long demonstration at the city's Independence Monument had little chance of getting concessions from the government and was exposing them to counter-charges of helping the Communists. The students may also have wanted to rethink their position on the draft constitution in light of its evident overwhelming approval at the polls on 30 April. They reportedly plan to return to classes today but have indicated that other forms of protest are now being contemplated.

The government's restraint in permitting the demonstration at the monument probably helped to calm the situation. Although it has now promised to investigate the shooting incident at the law school on 27 April, the regime will find it difficult to placate the students without implicitly repudiating Lon Nol--who has already blamed "outsiders" for student casualties. On balance, Lon Nol handled the dissenters skillfully, but the events of the past two weeks will not soon be forgotten or forgiven by the students. There are signs that the demonstrators have won some sympathy from the Phnom Penh population, as well as from Buddhists and several members of the military establishment. If this is the case, the students may be encouraged to renew their overt opposition to the government, perhaps by zeroing in on First Minister Son Ngoc Thanh. They apparently feel "betrayed" by Thanh, who, they claim, had said he would quit if the government took strong measures against them. (SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEM)

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NIGERIA: General Gowon is working hard to promote economic cooperation and his own leadership in West Africa.

As a result of Gowon's visits to 11 West African states over the past two years, Nigeria has signed an array of bilateral friendship treaties, trade agreements, and commercial accords. Lagos' increasing oil revenues now permit Gowon to make more spectacular gestures, such as last week's \$3-million interest-free loan to Dahomey, which also has received Nigerian financing for a telecommunications facility and a highway.

Nigeria's first serious interest in multilateral economic associations was revealed early this week when Gowon concluded a state visit to Togo by signing an agreement with President Eyadema to join the two states in an "economic ensemble." It is to constitute the nucleus of an economic community that other West African states will be encouraged to join. Gowon's visit overlapped the Lome meeting of the French-speaking heads of state in the Afro-Malagasy and Mauritian Common Organization (OCAM), and Gowon used the occasion to reach a personal reconciliation with Presidents Houphouet-Boigny of Ivory Coast and Bongo of Gabon, both of whom had recognized Biafra during the Nigerian civil war. The direct contacts established in Togo would strengthen Gowon's hand if he should push for the formation of a regional economic organization.

Gowon's recent diplomatic activities are contributing handsomely to the success of his campaign to play a leading role in West Africa. Earlier this year he demonstrated his nationalist credentials by pledging increased aid for the insurgents in Portuguese Guinea. Now he is using his charisma and Nigeria's money to steal the attention of the smaller French-speaking states away from the long-time regional leaders, Houphouet-Boigny and Senghor of Senegal. Both were cordial to Gowon in Togo, and

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Senghor again is speaking out for Anglophone-Francophone cooperation, but the Nigerian general will have to move with the utmost tact to avoid antagonizing them.

Gowon's growing regional stature is sure to be viewed with concern in Paris, which still wields major influence in most West African countries. The French are now cooperating in a few regional programs that include both French and English-speaking states, but Paris has discouraged past efforts to create organizations spanning the cultural barrier and diluting France's role. Nigeria's loan to Dahomey is significant, even relative to the annual aid provided by France. Small Francophone states, such as Dahomey, are eager to demonstrate whatever independence they can, although none can yet afford to jeopardize their continuing reliance on French assistance. (SECRET)

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CEYLON: The military alert that began in mid-March when the government feared a new outbreak of insurgency may be lifted early next week, according to the US defense attaché. Although no uprising appears likely in the near future, the possibility of eventual violence cannot be discounted. Ceylon's economic situation remains difficult, and the government is unpopular. The authorities are in the process of freeing some 5,000 detainees thought to have been only marginally involved in last year's insurrection, and some will probably join the several hundred rebels currently at large. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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BURUNDI: The violence that began last weekend continues and now appears to be assuming the dimensions of a major insurrection that has devastated extensive areas of southern Burundi. Most of the area is out of government control and the army--estimated at 2,800--is spread very thin but is fighting well, according to the US Embassy. The insurrection apparently is being led by survivors of a Hutu rebellion in 1965, although the government has identified them as Hutu "followers" of Pierre Mulele, a Zairian rebel executed by Kinshasa in 1968. At President Micombero's request, Zaire is sending a company of troops, probably to take up guard duties in the capital in order to free government troops for the field. The rebels so far have been unable to spark a countrywide Hutu uprising against the Tutsi-dominated government. (SECRET)

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